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News Release

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Apple Valley woman admits embezzling from veterans

A 55-year-old Apple Valley woman, who was serving as an appointed fiduciary for 33 veterans, pleaded guilty today in federal court to making a false statement to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to conceal her embezzlement of approximately \$1 million from the veterans.

Connie Marie Hanson pleaded guilty to one count of making a false statement. She entered her plea July 31 in Minneapolis before U.S. District Court Judge David Doty. Hanson was charged on June 17.

According to Hanson's plea agreement, she admitted that from 2006 through 2008, she took hundreds of thousands of dollars from the veterans' bank accounts and used the money to support a gambling habit. Hanson also admitted she submitted a false federal fiduciary's accounting to the department to conceal and cover up the embezzlement.

Hanson faces a potential maximum penalty of five years in prison. Judge Doty will determine Hanson's sentence at a future date.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Department of Veterans Affairs-Office of Inspector General, the U.S. Social Security Administration-Office of Inspector General, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation Division and the Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joe Dixon.